

Message Text

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ORIGIN EPA-04

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 AID-20 CEQ-02 CIAE-00 COA-02

COME-00 DODE-00 EB-11 INR-10 L-03 NSF-04 NSC-10

NSAE-00 PM-07 RSC-01 SCI-06 SS-20 SPC-03 ACDA-19

SCEM-02 AEC-11 /150 R

66611

DRAFTED BY: EPA/ORP:RDYER

APPROVED BY: SCI/AE:HDBREWSTER

EPA/ORP:DSMITH (SUBS)

EPA/AI:RPORTER

EPA/AI:FGREEN

SCI/EN:WSALMON

USAEC/WMT:HFSOULE

USAEC/IP:HBENGELSDORF

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P 181941Z OCT 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION IAEA VIENNA PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH, IAEA, SENV

SUBJ: IAEA PANEL REPORT GOV/1622 OCEAN DUMPING

1. US AGENCIES ARE WELL ALONG IN DEVELOPING OFFICIAL
US VIEWS ON GOV 1622 WHICH WE INTEND TO FORWARD TO THE
MISSION IN THE NEAR FUTURE. HOWEVER, BEFORE WE CAN
COMPLETE THIS ACTION WE URGENTLY NEED FROM THE
SECRETARIAT CERTAIN CLARIFICATIONS RELATING TO THE
INCONSISTENCIES THAT APPEAR BETWEEN VARIOUS PARTS OF
THE NRPB-R14 REPORT, NEA OF OECD REASSESSMENT AND THE
IAEA DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS. THE MISSION IS REQUESTED
TO URGENTLY PRESENT THESE POINTS TO DR. Y. NISHIWAKI
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WITH REQUEST THAT WE BE PROVIDED WITH AN IMMEDIATE

RESPONSE. IN ADDITION, WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO SCHEDULE A PHONE CALL BETWEEN DYER, SOULE AND NISHIWAKI IF THIS WILL HELP EXPEDITE THE MATTER.

2. SPECIFIC POINTS WHICH EPA AND AEC WOULD BE RAISING ARE AS FOLLOWS: THE SECRETARIAT SHOULD BE NOTIFIED THAT OUR COMMENTS ON THE ENTIRE REPORT WILL COVER OTHER ASPECTS AS WELL.

A. SECTION 2.1 OF THE IAEA DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS (BASIS OF THE DEFINITION OF HIGH-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE OR OTHER HIGH-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE MATTER UNSUITABLE FOR DUMPING AT SEA). SINCE THE FINDINGS OF THE NEA HAZARD ASSESSMENT FOR RADIOACTIVE WASTE DISPOSAL INTO THE NORTHEAST ATLANTIC WERE USED IN DERIVING THE DEFINITION, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THE DERIVATION IN SECTION 2.1 BE CONSISTENT WITH THE NEA FINDINGS. THIS DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE THE CASE IN THE PRESENT DRAFT. FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE CONCLUSIONS ON PAGE 24 OF THE NEA HAZARD ASSESSMENT, THE PROPOSED LIMITING DISPOSAL RATE FOR BETA AND GAMMA, REPEAT BETA AND GAMMA, ACTIVE WASTE IS TEN TO THE ELEVENTH POWER CI/YR, BUT THE IAEA RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE CHANGED THIS TO READ, "TEN TO THE TWELFTH POWER CI/YR FOR MIXED FISSION PRODUCTS, REPEAT MIXED FISSION PRODUCTS". AFTER APPROPRIATE SAFETY FACTORS ARE APPLIED THIS YIELDS "TEN TO THE EIGHTH POWER CI/YR FOR BETA, REPEAT BETA, EMITTERS" ALONE. NOT ONLY SHOULD THE IAEA RECOMMENDATIONS CHANGE THE LIMITING DISPOSAL RATE TO "TEN TO THE ELEVENTH POWER CI/YR FOR BETA-GAMMA ACTIVE WASTES" TO BE CONSISTENT WITH THE NEA ASSESSMENT, BUT THE TEN TO THE EIGHTH POWER CI/YR SHOULD BE REDUCED TO TEN TO THE SEVENTH POWER CI/YR FOR BETA-GAMMA, REPEAT BETA-GAMMA, WASTES OR BELOW TEN TO THE SEVENTH POWER FOR BETA, REPEAT BETA, WASTES ONLY. THE RESULT OF THESE CHANGES IS TO REDUCE THE LIMITING CONCENTRATION OF BETA WASTES TO TEN TO THE SECOND POWER CI/TONNE FOR BETA-GAMMA, REPEAT BETA-GAMMA, WASTES OR TO SOME AS YET UNSPECIFIED NUMBER BELOW TEN TO THE SECOND POWER CI/TONNE FOR BETA, REPEAT BETA, WASTES ALONE.

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B. ANOTHER SERIOUS INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN THE NEA HAZARD ASSESSMENT AND THE IAEA DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNS THE DISPOSAL DEPTH OF THE PACKAGED WASTES. THE NEA LIMITING QUANTITIES OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE ARE BASED ON DISPOSAL BELOW 5000M. ON THE IBERIAN ABYSSAL PLAIN WHILE THE IAEA ONLY RECOMMENDS THAT THE DEPTH MUST BE BELOW 2000M. THEREFORE, WE COULD CONCEIVABLY

HAVE APPROXIMATELY A 3000M. SHORTER VERTICAL DIFFUSION DISTANCE WITH AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT CURRENT STRUCTURE, DENSITY GRADIENT, BIOTA, ETC. THIS HAS BEEN PARTLY COMPENSATED FOR BY ADDING IN A SAFETY FACTOR OF ONE HUNDRED. HOWEVER, CONSIDERING AMONG OTHER THINGS, (1) THE POTENTIALLY SHORT VERTICAL DIFFUSION DISTANCE, (2) THE FACT THAT UPWELLING MAY OCCUR TO A DEPTH OF 350 M., AND (3) THE CLOSER PROXIMITY TO LAND, THE SAFETY FACTOR OF ONE HUNDRED IS PROBABLY INADEQUATE TO COMPENSATE FOR THE DIFFERENCE IN THE RECOMMENDED DISPOSAL DEPTHS. THEREFORE, SINCE PROBABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THE IAEA RECOMMENDATIONS IS THE DEFINITION OF HIGH-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE OR OTHER HIGH-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE MATTER UNSUITABLE FOR DUMPING AT SEA, EITHER THE RECOMMENDED DISPOSAL DEPTH SHOULD BE CHANGED TO READ 5000 M. UNDER SECTION 4.2 (1), OR ELSE A REEVALUATION OF THE BASIS FOR THE DEFINITION AND POSSIBLE REDUCTION OF THE PROPOSED NUMBERS UNDER SECTION 2.2 SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

C. NRPB-R14 REPORT: SECTION 2.1, PARAGRAPH 4, P. 8, OF THE IAEA DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS STATES THAT, "THE LIMITING CAPACITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN RELATION TO DUMPING INTO THE NORTHEAST ATLANTIC HAS RECENTLY BEEN REASSESSED BY THE NUCLEAR ENERGY AGENCY OF OECD, BASED ON THE RESULTS OF A UK EVALUATION (NRPB-R14)." YET THE NRPB-R14 REPORT IS DATED JUNE 1973, WITH AN ABSTRACT WRITTEN IN JULY 1973, WHILE THE NEA HAZARD ASSESSMENT WAS COMPLETED IN MAY 1973. HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE?

D. OUR REVIEW OF THE NRPB-R14 REPORT INDICATES SIGNIFICANT INCONSISTENCIES BETWEEN IT AND THE NEA
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HAZARD ASSESSMENT WHICH IN TURN MAY RESULT IN A NEED TO RECONSIDER THE IAEA DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS.

(1) ON P. 16 OF THE NRPB-R14
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE206716
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EPA/ORP:RDYER
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731023/aaaaarai.tel
Line Count: 153
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN EPA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: shawdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05-Dec-2001 by bryansd0>; APPROVED <07 MAR 2002 by shawdg>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: IAEA PANEL REPORT GOV/1622 OCEAN DUMPING
TAGS: TECH, SENV, IAEA
To: IAEA VIENNA
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005